December 2018

Kalyāṇamittā

Buddhist and Pāli College of Singapore

Message from the Honorary Chairman of BPCA….

Dear Bhantes, members of BPCA and students of BPC, we have come to the end of the year and into the festive season. BPCA wish all of you a very happy, special and safe holiday.

The 2 years term for the current BPCA committee has also come to the end. I would like to thank all the BPCA committee members for their hard work in the last 2 years and brought many enjoyable moments to everyone who had participated in the BPCA organised events for 2017 and 2018. I would like to give special thanks to all the committee members for sticking together for BPCA to the last day despite encountering many unpleasant obstacles in the last 2 years. In the last 2 years, as the Chairman of BPCA, I have realised 2 things:

1) Achieving higher educational qualification does not equate to achieving higher wisdom. Buddha is right. We can achieve higher wisdom only through a long period of meditation.

2) I have also got a better understanding of the 4 types of good friend and 4 types of bad friend in the Sigalovada Sutta.

So if you want to have a better understanding of the teaching of the Buddha, come and serve in the BPCA.

The next Annual General Meeting (AGM) is on the 13 / Jan / 2019, 1 to 2 pm at the Chew Quee Neo Hall, Mangala Vihara. Please come and volunteer as a key appointment holder or serve as a committee member or to support your favourite person to be elected as the next BPCA Chairman.

We wish everyone a safe, happy and prosperous New Year, 2019.

With Metta
Nimala@AlexGoh (BSc (Hons), BA, MA)
Honorary Chairman, BPCA

MEMBERS OF THE BPC ALUMINI COMMITTEE 2017-18

Honorary Advisor – Bhante Gnanarama & Bhante Seelananda

Honorary Chairman - Alex Goh @ Nimala

Honorary Secretary – Tham Saik Hoong

Honorary Treasurer - Elizabeth Kheh

Head of Volunteer & Student Services – James Phoon

Head of Continuing Education Services – Jeffrey Chieng

Head of Events and Bonding – James Phoon / Eric Wong

Head of Editorial – Eric Wong

Head of IT and Computer Resources – Patrick Lim

BPCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2018

Past Events

CNY for Bhantes at Restaurant	24 Feb 2018
Lo Hei at Mangala Vihara	25 Feb 2018
1st Intro to Buddhism Course (16th Intake)	7 Mar 2018
Holy Tour of India Ellora Caves (8 Days)	9 March 2018
Vesak Day (2018)	29 May 2018
Diploma Preview	21 July (MV) 5 August (PMT)
2nd Intro to Buddhism Course (17th Intake)	25 July 2018
Diploma Orientation Day	7 October 2018
Bhante Gnanarama Birthday at MV	2 December 2018

Upcoming Events

BPCA AGM	13 January 2019
Tai Chi Class – Every Monday 7.30 to 9.00 pm	Every Monday

For details, please contact BPCA Honorary Secretary at

bpca2017sg@gmail.com

MISSION
BUDDHIST AND PALI COLLEGE of SINGAPORE

To provide tertiary education in Buddhist Studies leading to award of Diploma, Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts and PhD of the Buddhist & Pali University of Sri Lanka.

The Buddhist and Pali College of Singapore was set up in 1993 as an educational project to complement the Dhamma Classes.

Our email contact :
bpca2017sg@gmail.com
for editorials, general enquiries and any matters relating to our Alumni

FROM THE EDITOR

The exams are over, as we wait for another new beginning in the next academic year in January 2019. Diploma students traditionally starts earlier, and is already busy in their classes.

The Committee members of BPCA have a term of 2 years. After which, we try to introduce new members into the committee, for exposure and experience and most of all, come up with new ideas, with the purpose of spreading the Dhamma.

For those who wants to make an impact and contribute to BPC and BPCA, please do contact us. We are in search of new blood to carry the torch forward.

Buddha says there are 4 kinds of people. Come and be the 4th type, the one who helps both himself and others.

We welcome any contribution of articles that relates to Buddhism or Buddhist way of life. In fact we encourage you to contribute since this Newsletter is for YOU. And if you feel an urge to serve our community, we have vacancies in our Alumni team. Contact us and we can work something out.

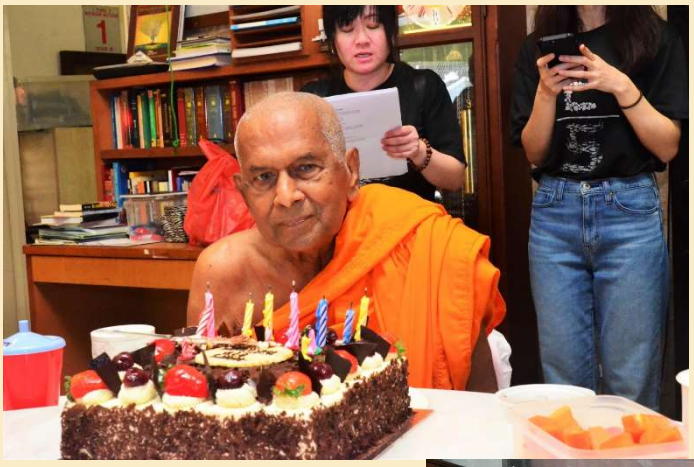
Write to us at our official eMail address : bpca2017sg@gmail.com

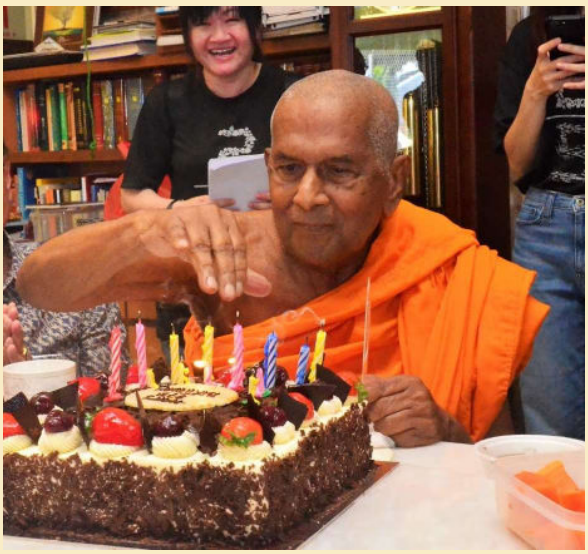
w/Metta
The Editorial Team

Bhante Gnanarama's Birthday Celebration 2018

Bhante Gnanarama celebrated his Birthday at Mangala Vihara, starting with a morning Puja, followed by activities from the students and Teachers at the Mangala Hall.

感恩





Bhante

TIPITAKA

The Buddha has passed away, but the sublime Teaching; which He expounded during His long and successful ministry and which He unreservedly bequeathed to humanity, still exists in its pristine purity.

Although the Buddha has left no written records of His Teachings, His disciples preserved them by committing to memory and transmitting them orally from generation to generation. Three months after the passing away of the Buddha, in the 8fi" year of King Ajatasattu's reign, 500 pre-eminent Arahants concerned with the Doctrine held a Convocation at Rajagaha to rehearse it. The Venerable Ananda Thera, the Buddha's beloved attendant who had the special privilege and honour of hearing the discourses from the Buddha himself, and the Venerable Upali Thera were chosen to answer questions about the Dhamma (Doctrine) and the Vinaya (Discipline) respectively.

The first council compiled and arranged in its present form the Pali Tipitaka, which represents the entire body of the Buddha's Teaching.

Two other Councils of Arahants were held 100 and 236 years later respectively, again to rehearse the word of the Buddha because attempts were being made to pollute the pure Teaching.

About 83 BC, during the reign of the pious Sinhaia King Vatta Gamani Abhaya, a Council of Arahants was held, and the TipitaiKa was, for the first time in the history of Buddhism, committed to writing at Aluvihara in Ceylon.

The voluminous Tipitaka, which contains the essence of the Buddha's Teaching, is estimated to be about 11 times the size of the Bible.

The word Tipitaka means three Baskets. They are the Basket of discipline (Vinaya pitaka), the Basket of discourse (Sutta Pitaka) and the Basket of Ultimate Doctrine (Abhidhamma Pitaka).

The Tipitaka is an extensive body of Canonical Pali literature in which are enshrined the Teachings of Gotama Buddha expounded for 45 years from the time of his enlightenment to his Parinibbana.

The general discourses and sermons Intended for both the bhikkhus and lay disciples, delivered by the Buddha on various occasions (together with a few discourses delivered by some of his distinguished disciples), are collected and classified in a great division known as the Suttanta Pitaka.

The great division in which are Incorporated injunctions and admonitions of the Buddha on modes of conduct, and restraints on both bodily and verbal actions of the bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, which form rules of discipline for them, is called the Vinaya Pitaka.

The philosophical aspect of the Buddha's Teachrng, more profound and abstract than the discourses of the Suttanta Pitaka, is classified under the great division known as the Abhidhamma Pitaka. Abhidhamma deals with ultimate truths, expounds ultimate truths and investigates the Mind and Matter and the relationship between them. All that the Buddha taught forms the subject matter and substance of the Pali canon, which Is divided Into these 3 divisions called Pitakas, literally baskets, Hence, Tipitaka means three baskets or three baskets of divisions of the Buddha's Teaching.

Vinaya Pitaka

The Vinaya Pitaka, which is regarded as the sheet anchor of the Holy Order, deals mainly with the rules and regulations of the Order of Bhikkhus (monks) and Bhikkunis (nuns). For nearly 20 years after the Enlightenment of the Buddha, no definite rules were laid down for the control and discipline of the Sangha (Order). Subsequently as the occasion arose, the Buddha promulgated rules for the future discipline of the Sangha. Reasons for the promulgation of rules, their various implications and specific Vinaya ceremonies of the Sangha
are fully described in the Vinaya Pitaka. The history of the gradual development of the Sasana from its very inception, a brief account of the life and ministry of the Buddha, and detoils of the three Councils are some other additional relevant contents of the Vinaya Pitaka.

The Vinaya Pitaka is made up of rules and discipline laid down for regulating the conduct of the Buddha's disciples who have been admitted as bhikkhus and bhikkunis into the Order. These rules embody authoritative injunctions of the Buddha on modes of conduct and restraints on both physical and verbal actions. They deal with transgressions of discipline, and the various categories restraints and admonitions in accordance with the nature of the offence.

The Vinaya Pitaka consists of the following five books;

1. Pārajika Pāli	}	(Major Offences)
2. Pācittiya Pāli	) Vibhanga	(Minor Offences)
3. Mahāvagga Pāaai		(Greater Section)
4. Cūllavagga Pāli	~ Khandaka	(Lesser Section)
5. Parivāra Pāli		(Epitome of the Vinaya)

Sutta Pitaka

The Sutta Pitaka consists chiefly of instructive discourses delivered by the Buddha to both the Sangha and the laity on various occasions. A few discourses, expounded by disciples such as the Venerables Sariputta, Moggallana, and Ananda, are incorporated and are accorded as much veneration as the Word of the Buddha Himself since they were approved by Him. Most of the sermons were intended mainly for the benefit of Bhikkhus, and they deal with the Holy Life and with the exposition of the Doctrine. There were several other discourses which deal with both material and the moral progress of His lay-follower. The Sigalovada Sutta, for instance, deals mainly with the duties of a layman. There also a few interesting talks given to children.

This Pitaka may be compared to a book of prescriptions since the discourses were expounded on diverse occasions to suit the temperaments of various persons.

The Sutta Pitaka consists of the following five Nikayas (Collections) :-

1	Digha Nika-ya	(Collection of Long Discourses)
2	Majjhima Nikaya	(Collection of Middle-lengths Discourses)
3	Samyutta Nikaya	(Collection of Kindred Sayings)
4	Anguttara Niknya	(Collection of Gradual Sayings}
5	Khuddaka Nikaya	(Smaller Collection)

This fifth is subdivided into 15 books:

1. Khuddaka	(Shorter Texts)
2. Dhammapada	(The Way of Truth)
3. Udana	(Paeans of Joy)
4. Itivuttaka	("Thus said" Discourses)
5. Sutta Nipata	(Collected Discourses)
6. Vimana Vatthu	(Stories of Celestial Mansions)
7. Peta Vatthu	(Stories of Petas)
8. Theragatha	(Psalms of Brethren)
9. Therigatha	(Psalms of Sisters)
10. Jataka	(Birth Stories of the Bodhisatta)
11. Niddesa	(Expositions)
12. Patisambhida	(Book of Analytical Knowledge)
13. Apadana	(Lives of Arahants)
14. Buddhavamsa	(History of the Buddha)
15. Cariya Pitaka	(Modes of Conduct)

Abhidhamma Pitaka

The Abhidhamma Pitaka is the most important and most interesting of the three, containing as it does the profound philosophy of the Buddha's teaching in contrast to the simpler discourses in the Sutta Pitaka. Abhidhamma, the Higher Doctrine of the Buddha, expounds the quintessence of the His profound teachings.

The Abhidhamma Pitaka is composed of the following seven works:

1.	Dhammasangani	(Classification of Dhamma)
2.	Vibhanga	(Divisions)
3.	Dhatukatha	(Discourses on Elements)
4.	Puggala Pannati	(The Book on Individuals)
5.	Kathavatthu	(Points of Controversy)
6.	Yamaka	(The Book of Pairs)
7.	Patthana	(The Book of Casual Relations)

Note: Dhammasangani Pali is the first book of Abhidhamma, and the Patthana, the last book, are the most important of the 7 treatises of Abhidhamma, providing as they do the quintessence of the entire Abhidhamma.

Going With The Flow Is The Path As Our Guide To Go

Zhuang Zhou or Zhuang Zi (370-287B.C.) Quotes

Flow with whatever is happening and let your mind be free. Stay centered by accepting whatever you are doing. This is the ultimate.

I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.

Happiness is the absence of the striving for happiness.

Life can be embraced but not mastered, so relax, absorb the hard bumps and learn to enjoy it.

Flow with whatever may happen, and let your mind be free: stay centred by accepting whatever you are doing. This is the ultimate – by Chinese philosopher Zhuang Zi. We grew up thinking that our lives are perfectible, that if we are smart enough and determined enough, we can make our life and our world better, and better. But some may not think that way.

Normally all of us view life as a complex and unpredictable affair that cannot be mastered. It can be embraced. It can be negotiated more or less skilfully. But mastered? Not a chance. However smart and determined we are, our life is always going to consist of both light and darkness, joy and sadness, good and bad, up and down, yang and yin. Life is a bumpy ride. The trick is to relax, absorb the bumps – and learn to enjoy it.

According to Tao Te Ching Quotes by Lao Tzu: The Watercourse Way by American philosopher and writer, Alan Watts (1915-1973). I was struck by a passage in which he talks about his experiences of practising Chinese calligraphy. He writes: “Because ink is mostly water, Chinese Calligraphy -controlling the flow of water with the soft brush as distinct from the hard pen – requires that you go with the flow. “if you hesitate, hold the brush too long in one place, or hurry, or try to correct what you have written, the blemishes are all too obvious. That is precisely how we have come to feel about life. Many had after years of failed attempts to master and control it, to eradicate all the darkness, the sadness, and the bad, we have somehow discovered the importance of acceptance, of going with the flow.

Few weeks ago, I started to teach a few dozen of young kids of three and four years old in Mandarin/English. I planned and prepared my first lesson meticulously. But I quickly learnt that when you are dealing with a dozen three-year old/four-year old bundles of fun and energy who do not speak your language, things do not always go to plan. Young children laugh at the most unexpected times. They misinterpreted the simplest instructions. They learn some things much more quickly, and other things much more slowly, than I expect them to do. So we must adapt. So we have to go with the flow. There is no choice but to go with the flow. I planned my first lesson as though it were a train journey, along a straight track, with fixed stops en route. But it turned out to be more like a sailboat journey, borne along by tides currents, and winds.

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Going with the flow does not come easily to me and I believe to most of us too. However, that that first lesson is anything to go by, my new teaching job will give me plenty of opportunities to practise.

I did an experiment in the class. I tried accidentally to put glasses on upside-down, knocked them halfway across the room in a failed attempt to catch them when the slipped from my nose, and then put them back on with one of the lenses missing, the children roared with laughter. My first reaction was to panic at the loss of control, and to feel humiliated. But then I remember that innocent laughter is a good thing, and that I ought to accept and embrace it, even when – especially when – it is directed at me.

Everybody learnt something that day. The children learnt a little bit of Mandarin, and certainly, we all learn a little bit about life, laughter and going with the flow.

Buddha said: "If you are quiet enough you will hear the flow of the universe. You will feel its rhythm. Go with the flow. Happiness lies ahead. Meditation is key".

Contributed by Tham Saik Hoong

Introduction to Buddhism 17th Intake

The 17th Intake of the popular Introduction to Buddhism Course took place from 25th July to 26th September 2018. Dana from the students amounted to $1,100. We are grateful to the teachers, Sis Jasmine Tan, Sis Sacca Ko and Sis Leung Hui Miin for conducting the 10-session course. A heartfelt "Thank You" also goes to our supporting team members, Sis Myint Myint and Sis Lynn Choy, who patiently attended to the enquiries, registrations and administrations in response to our advertisement in the TODAY newspaper. The next Intake (18th) is scheduled for March 2019.

Buddhist & Pali College Alumni

AGM

Annual General Meeting

Date: 13 January 2019, Sunday

Time: 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Venue: Mangala Vihara Buddhist Temple
(Level 2, Chew Quee Neo Hall)

Agenda:

- Bhante Gnanarama's opening remarks
- Chairman's report
- Election of 2019/20 Executive committee

You are cordially invited to attend our AGM

Registration begins at 12.45pm
Please RSVP by email your name and contact number to: bpca2017sg@gmail.com